

Types of Breeders

In your search for a puppy, you will run across different types of breeders. It's important to be aware of the pros and cons of each. We encourage you to buy a puppy from a 'reputable hobby breeder' or 'experienced breeder' rather than a puppy mill, commercial breeder or backyard breeder. Here's why:

Trait	Puppy Mill	Commercial Breeder	Backyard Breeder	Reputable Hobby Breeder	Reputable Experienced Breeder
Motive for Breeding	To supply pet stores and make a profit.	To supply pet stores and make a profit.	To produce puppies for profit, or so their kids can experience "the miracle of birth," or to have another just like one of the parents.	To better the breed and continue a well thought-out plan.	To perfect a specific type to leave a legacy.
Breed Club Member	Hardly ever.	Has a network of business contacts instead.	May masquerade as a member.	Yes and extremely dedicated.	Yes and extremely dedicated.
Mentor	Not interested in breed improvement.	Does not specialize in specific breed.	Works independently, lacks guidance.	Invites knowledge.	Is a mentor, writes books or articles, conducts seminars.
Breeds to the Standard	Uses any available stock.	Focuses on general appearance.	May not even be aware of the breed standard. Breeds to any convenient dog.	Strives towards the ideal.	Often helps to define it.
Activity in dog related activities (shows/trials, rescue)	Does not need to promote establishment; sells to brokers, pet shops, etc.	Does not need to promote establishment; sells to brokers, pet shops, etc.	Often rescues only to attain more stock. Rarely attends shows or trials.	Shows and trials to objectively test breeding stock.	Often judges, provides seminars, writes articles, and willingly mentors serious Hobby Breeders.

Knowledge of the breed	Often pretends to know some.	Claims that it's not important.	May share false or incomplete information.	Studies continuously.	Impacts the breed for many decades with knowledge of dogs over many generations.
Sells pets with spay/neuter contract and tries to stay in touch with new owners	Often issues papers via generic "registries" with less stringent requirements.	All pups sold have full breeding rights.	May charge more for "breeding" papers.	Yes, and diligently follows up on progeny.	Always differentiates breed/pet quality and insists on frequent updates.
Keeps up with health and temperament issues affecting the breeding and provides in-depth guarantees	No need to; mostly supplies brokers and pet shops.	Meets minimum standards as required by state law.	May refuse to acknowledge most problems. Considers shows and trials as too "political."	Goes above and beyond standard requirement.	Maintains a solid support system - accepts full responsibility for every puppy produced.
Performs health testing for all breeding stock for genetic diseases affecting the particular breed	No interest, may offer papers as proof of quality. Papers alone are not proof of quality.	No interest. May provide undocumented paperwork for appearances sake.	Is unfamiliar with health testing usually statements of good health are stated to impress consumers.	Intensive testing always a priority.	Often initiates club sponsored seminars and clinics. Intensive testing always a priority.
Maintains records on all dogs in gene pool including progeny	Often supplies brokers and pet shops, records unavailable.	Dogs and puppies are often auctioned off in lots, records unavailable.	Focuses mostly on current dogs, no records or knowledge of genes.	Attempts to continuously track every puppy produced.	Bases entire breeding program on extensive gene pool data.

Clean environment always maintained	Minimum standards vary greatly in cleanliness.	Minimum standards maintained for state inspections.	Conditions may vary greatly depending on available income, usually makeshift accommodations.	Clean, healthy and mentally stimulating environment.	Usually "home raised with love" and well cared for. Clean, healthy and mentally stimulating environment.
Expected longevity with any particular breed	Will continue as long as the sales are coming.	Depends on popularity of specific breeds.	Unrealistic expectations - easily disillusioned.	On a mission-plans to stay for the long haul.	Involved with the breed / breeding for decades - makes a lifetime commitment.
Health guarantee provided	No, it cuts into profits.	7-day guarantee mandated by state.	No health guarantee beyond proof of first set of vaccines, if that. Not qualified to give advice if a problem arises.	Offers written guarantee and is available to answer questions to new owners. Good knowledge of history in dogs.	Extensive knowledge of health history, offers replacements to owners of genetically affected dogs.
Ability to meet the parents of the litter	If available, may be in poor physical condition.	If available, dogs are not used to contact with people.	May or may not be well loved and cared for companions, often unwilling to show entire litter or parents to buyer.	Shows friendly mother and entire litter in clean environment; stud dog too, if in residence. Helps buyer choose appropriate puppy.	Can explain how breeding was planned to emphasize specific qualities and can speak at length about how puppies compare.
What you can expect after purchase	Nothing, may not be able to contact at all.	No concern for dog after sale is final.	Tells you if you can't keep it to take it to the pound or shelter.	Available for questions, and wants to keep in touch. Will take back dog or puppy at any time.	After purchase will help with training and grooming, available for all questions and knows the answers.

Price	Lowest end of range.	Priced according to market, but is marked up from original source for profit.	Mid-range to move puppies quickly.	High end of mid-range.	Price will not reflect all that is invested.
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